(c) The contribution made by agriculture, industry and service sectors to overall GDP growth rate during the first nine months of 1999-2000 in terms of per cent point contribution was 0.3 per cent, 1.8 per cent and 3.7 per cent respectively.

Suspension of action against FIIs

3313. SHRIMATI SARLA MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that he has issued directives to suspend the action to be taken by Income-Tax Department against the irregularities being committed by Foreign Institutional Investors only after a substantial decline on share market of India on 4th March;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) if not, what is meant by the statement made by him on 5th April stating that no further action would be taken by Income-Tax Department against these Foreign Institutional Investors?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR): (a) to (c) The benefit under Double Taxation Avoidance Convention between India and Mauritius which were being hitherto allowed to Mauritius-based investors were denied to a few Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) by the Assessing officers in Mumbai. This caused wide-spread apprehension and uncertainty amongst FIIS operating through Mauritius about the likely reopening of old assessments and tax treatment to investors under the Convention. Since the issue had wider ramifications on FII investment and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows into India, it was considered necessary to put on hold all action against the concerned investors, pending a detailed examination. The Central Board of Direct Taxes has subsequently issued a clarificatory circular on the relevant issues.

Introduction of two-tier Courts

3314. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a long pendency of cases, both civil and criminal, in various courts and the judgement is not delivered in the law suits before 15-20 years;

(b) whether Government propose to introduce two-tier courts instead of three-tier as at present and also make the courts sit throughout the year like other Government offices; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) As on 1.2.2000, the pendency of cases in Supreme Court, was 20,260. The pendency of cases in High Courts is about 31 lakhs as per latest available information. The number of pending cases in the District/ Subordinate Courts as on 31.12.1998 was approximately 2.04 crore. Age-wise pendency of cases in the Supreme Court of India, High Courts and in the Subordinate Courts is given in Annexure. [*See* Appendix, 189, Annexure No. 86]

(b) At present, there is no such proposal under consideration of the Government.

(c) The First National Judicial Pay Commision has, *inter-alia* made following recommendation for increasing the number of working days of courts:

> "That till such period the arrears are brought down to manageable limits, the Court vacation period should be cut down by 15 days in a year."
>
> The matter has been left to the High Courts to work out appropriately by curtailing the existing vacation.

Vacancies in CAT

†3315. SHRI GOPALSINH G. SOLANKI: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question No. 1324 given in the Rajya Sabha on 7th March, 2000 and state:

(a) the details of the posts of judges lying vacant in the various Central Administrative Tribunals, State-wise, as on date;

(b) the reasons for the posts lying vacant; and

(c) the steps being taken by Government to fill the vacant posts?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) The Central Administrative Tribunal is functioning in accordance with the Administrative Tribunals Act, 1985, and it has one Principal Bench and Sixteen other Benches located at various seats of

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.